

Violent Hollywood: Masculine fantasies, female victimhood and The Black Dahlia



The Black Dahlia (2006) © Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.

Jelle Havermans

2021

Name: Jelle Havermans

Title: Violent Hollywood: Masculine fantasies, female victimhood and The Black Dahlia

Adviser: Steve Rushton

Second reader:

Word count:

Thesis submitted to: the Department of Lens-Based Media, Piet Zwart Institute, Willem de Kooning Academy, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the final examination for the degree of: Master of Arts in Fine Art & Design: Lens-Based Media.

‘I never knew her in life. She exists for me through others, in evidence of the ways her death drove them.’

- James Ellroy, *The Black Dahlia* (1984)

‘This bloodstained physical dismembering is a curious thing: it’s both the catastrophe itself and the subsequent method of trying to understand.’

- Melissa McCartney, *Death, Sharks, Surfers* (2019)

Index

Introduction

I: The 'hardboiled' LA crime: forensic disembodiment in literature and cinema

II: Murder in Hollywood: The Black Dahlia

III: Case study 1: True Confessions (1981)

IV: Case study 2: The Black Dahlia (2006)

V: Cinematic portrayals of masculine fantasies and female victimhood

Conclusion

This thesis contains spoilers for both *The Black Dahlia* (2006), *True Confessions* (1981), *American Horror Story: Murder House* (2011) and *Sin City* (2009).

It also contains graphic forensic photographs that some may find disturbing. Discretion is advised.

Introduction

In the summer of 2012, my stepmom hung herself. She had separated with my mom for almost a year then, but naturally, her premature death was a big shock to my family. I was eighteen at the time, and had just graduated high school. I vividly remember watching *Sin City* (2005) with my mom, just a few months after the funeral. Halfway through the film, Bruce Willis' character is strung up by his neck, and he just barely stays alive by tiptoeing on a stool. When the scene came up, my mom burst in tears and didn't stop crying for hours. It is perhaps no coincidence that I can still vividly remember this particular scene... its brutal violence amplified by the noir-inspired contrast and stark shadows.



Figure 1: Detective John Hartigan (Bruce Willis) tiptoes for his life in Sin City (2005)

During my teens, I mainly used films and videogames to escape from my dreadful home situation, in which an alcoholic and verbally abusing stepmom created a unsafe environment. The fact that I often fled to my room to watch films, helped grow my deep love for cinema; the thriller and horror genre in particular.

I didn't go to the funeral of stepmom in 2012, since she'd been the borderline terror of our household for many years. Afterwards, my sister described the visible marks she'd seen on her neck, which the mortuary had, apparently, rather unsuccessfully, tried to cover up. Although I hadn't seen my stepmom's body, I could picture it easily. The image that formed inside my head were based on the numerous bodies I had seen laying in coffins and mortuary tables in detectives and horror films. Therefore, the 'reality' of death and violence had already mingled with the Hollywood images that exist inside of my mind.

As a teen melancholiac, I would daydream about the beautiful girls in my class during the day, and watch disturbing horror films at night in which young women would get hacked to pieces with machetes, electric drill machines and axes. Fictionalised crime helped me escape my personal horrors and perhaps even assisted in surviving it. But it also distorted and warped my view of women.

Popular crime writers like Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett gave rise to the so called 'hard-boiled' LA crime genre in the 1930s, in which rough private eyes shot their way through LA's

underbelly in order to get closer to the truth. Hollywood quickly caught on and morphed these dark stories into *film noir*. These gritty features were in high regard and their influence is still noticeable in contemporary cinema. *Sin City* (2005), which I mentioned earlier, is a fairly recent example of how Hollywood still can't seem to let go of its noir past.

There is an obvious male fantasy at work in the detective genre, one that's progressed from the literary world to the silver screen and is still predominant in current media culture. Years ago, my therapist asked me to describe the inner figure that lived inside of my head. I told her it was a he, and that this man was masculine and wore an old fashioned raincoat and hat, reminiscent of Philip Marlowe, the moody, no nonsense detective often played by Humphrey Bogart. Much later I found out that Woody Allen wrote a film about an insecure man who seeks help from Philip Marlowe, much like myself at a younger age. This proves that, however Philip Marlowe popularity has long since faded, the masculine fantasy that he represents, still lingers.



Figure 2: Allan (Woody Allen) takes relationship advice from Philip Marlowe (Jerry Lacy) in Play It Again, Sam (1972)

In this thesis, I want to explore how the Los Angeles hardboiled detective has come off the page and found his way into film. Furthermore, I want to show how true crime that occurred in Hollywood has fuelled masculine stake in female embodiment. This thesis is about men cutting up women. Both literally as figuratively.

As case studies, I'll dissect two pictures that are loosely based on the real murder case of Elizabeth 'The Black Dahlia' Short, one of Hollywood's most notorious unsolved crimes in which a woman was found cut in half. The first film is *True Confessions* (1981), a neo-noir starring Robert DeNiro and Robert Duvall. The second one is more recent *The Black Dahlia* (2006), starring Josh Hartnett and Aaron Eckhart. In both these films female characters are beautiful vessels upon which the male fantasies are easily projected. Through exploring these two films, I hope to understand how the camera in Hollywood used to disembody women.

CHAPTER I

The 'hardboiled' LA crime genre: forensic disembodiment in literature and cinema

Literature

Writers like Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett and James M. Cain gave rise to a specific type of crime literature, known as the 'hard-boiled' crime genre, which often takes place in the Los Angeles of the first half of the 20th century. (Moore, 2006)

'The hard-boiled private detective is among the most recognizable characters in popular fiction since the 1920s--a tough product of a violent world, in which police forces are inadequate and people with money can choose private help when facing threatening circumstances.' (Moore, 2006) In most of these novels, that were in high demand over the course of the 1920s - 1950s, a male private eye [a freelance detective] is hired, often by a wealthy individual, to solve a problem or a crime. He is then caught up in all sorts of trouble as a result. The crime stories are action packed, contain explicit language and have easily recognizable and recurring characters; such as the femme fatale, corrupt cops and sleazy journalists. Raymond Chandler wrote that the 'smell of fear' generated by such stories was evidence of their serious response to the modern condition: 'Their characters lived in a world gone wrong, a world in which, long before the atom bomb, civilization had created the machinery for its own destruction and was learning to use it with all the moronic delight of a gangster trying out his

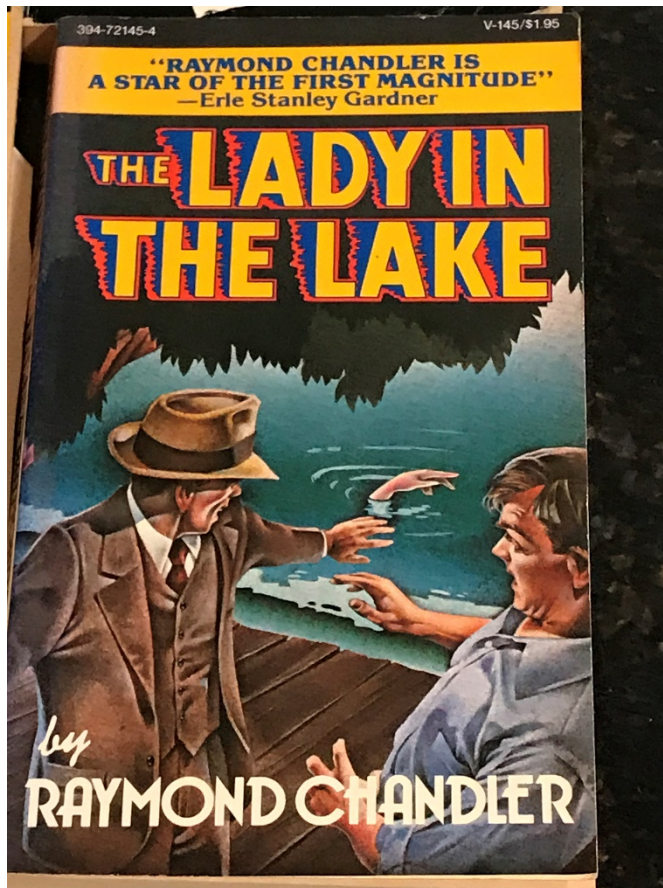


Figure 3: The cover of Raymond Chandler's 1943 classic 'The Lady in The Lake'

first machine-gun. The law was something to be manipulated for profit and power. The streets were dark with something more than night.' (Chandler,...) The best hardboiled crime writers used a recurring protagonist in their novels. The most famous example is Chandler's Philip Marlowe; the weary private eye that starred in over thirty stories and novels and was later famously portrayed by Humphrey Bogart in film versions. 'Marlowe, Chandler's virtuous and chivalrous "would-be-hero", finds himself violating his own knightly codex on his impossible quest for a better world. Thus, Chandler renews the detective genre by violating the rules of the knightly hero and disrupting social stereotypes.' (Biro) Before the 'hard-boiled' crime genre came into fashion around the 1920's, previous detective stories were constructed to follow the classic pattern established by Edgar Allan Poe and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, with the application of a heroic puzzle-solving detective like Poe's C. Auguste Dupin or Doyle's Sherlock Holmes.

Chandler's popular character Marlowe became a household name that broke with the classical, well-mannered European

detective established in the nineteenth century. Instead, the protagonist brushes shoulders with Los Angeles' crooks and criminals, uses violence and his connections to get to the truth. 'Marlowe became a knight in a society where a code of honour did not apply, and Chandler's private eye is not only an anachronism in the detective genre but also deviates from our expectations concerning the

heroic. Chandler thus paradoxically violates both the norms of the detective genre and defamiliarizes our view of the society he is describing. [...] Marlowe moves through Los Angeles constantly searching for ladies to rescue, helping the common man or handing the unscrupulous a shot of old-fashioned justice.' In most of these 'hardboiled' stories, female characters are shallow victims that give the male protagonist something to do. The premise of 'The Lady In The Lake' reads as following: 'A couple of missing wives—one a rich man's and one a poor man's—become the objects of Marlowe's investigation.' (Chandler, 1943) The wives are described as objects, since they are plot tools that give the hero a purpose. Earlier crime writers like Edgar Allan Poe and Conan Doyle established a narrative where evidence is isolated – set apart, dissected, disembodied and objectified. In their stories characters and the evidence become placeholders for a narrative, they produce a process of dissection and disembodiment. Although the hardboiled protagonist differs greatly from the well-mannered, scholar-like detectives in earlier crime novels, the process of forensic examination of evidence as a process of forensic dissection remained intact. The objectification and disembodiment of female characters are perhaps even prominent in the 'hardboiled' genre, and often display quite literally. On the cover of *The Lady In The Lake* (Figure 4), note the hand sticking out of the water.

A character like Philip Marlowe didn't age well. He is often homophobic, xenophobic, misogynist and racist. Many other stock characters that take a prominent place in the 'hardboiled' crime genre, such as the femme fatale, are now considered problematic stereotypes. The femme fatale, for example, is a one-dimensional, devious character that merely exist to create sexual tension and obstruct the main protagonist. 'Kill a guy, rob a bank — the femme fatale made me do it. These novels simmer with resentment over perceived encroachment and a desire to contain female power. [...] The femme fatale embodies a misogynist viewpoint, one that even fans like Abbott and me can't just brush off as a relic of the times in which Chandler wrote.' (Bancroft, 2018) The male protagonists in the 'hardboiled' crime genre are often living the heroic fantasies of the male audiences: playing into conservative ideas of masculinity and continuing narratives which there is little room for the female perspective.

In many of these stories, the glamorous and wealthy inhabitants of Los Angeles mingle with its crooks, reflecting on the city's dark heart; brooding with 'dope fiends', organised crime, gambling, and prostitution. In many of these novels, the questionable history of the Californian Metropole is a viable part of the story. Shady deals, blackmail and political scandals get in the way of the protagonist's investigation.

Perhaps this crime genre came into fashion because it's morbid and pessimistic undertone reflected a recognizable and part of American society, which struggled with poverty, crime and drugs caused by The Great Depression and World War II. 'These stories share a cold morality, a bleak view of a cruel world and guns,' (Jordison, 2014) The Guardian writer Sam Jordison stated while reflecting on Dashiell Hammett's work. 'Those novels and the subsequent movies were born of an especially downbeat era – an age characterised and shaped by first the Great Depression and then World War II. The spirit of those stories perfectly fit the zeitgeist and summed up – on the pages of pulp fiction and in the rolling reels of crime cinema – a real, resonant sensibility felt in both America and around the wider world.' (Clayton, 2014)

Film Noir

Double Indemnity (1944), *The Big Sleep* (1946) and *In A Lonely Place* (1950) are just a few of the hardboiled film adaptations that used Los Angeles' dark side as their backdrop. The French called this particular type of American Film 'Film Noir' (Eggerston, 2019), which it earned for its dark subject matter and gloomy visual style. The cinematography of Film Noir is said to be derived from German expressionist films (Bergstrom, 2014) and mainly consists of grainy black and white imagery, stark contrasts, and a playful emphasis on shadows and light. It's stark aesthetics resonate with the sombre tone of the movies, which play out in seedy motels, dark back alleys and dusty gangster holdouts. Just

as the tradition of disembodied female characters and dissecting evidence from nineteenth century literature bled into 1930-40s crime fiction, hardboiled crime fiction easily translated to the silver screen. The editing techniques of film (cutting, splicing, assembling and disassembling images) closely resemble the procedures that the male protagonist uses in film noir narratives, in order to separate evidence from the flow of reality.

Film Noir existed in a time when the deeply conservative 'Hays Code' was still active. Between 1934 and 1968, American films had to abide to a strict list of moral 'don'ts and be carefals'; which included the prohibition of scenes with 'profanity', nudity or an implied sympathy for criminals. (Adebowale, 2020) Over the course of its existence, the rules became less strict or were stretched. During the forties and early fifties however, the code still heavily influenced Hollywood and censored an industry that thrived on films in which sex and violent crime were key factors. Because of the Hays Code, most Film Noir films are relatively tame compared to cinema in our current day. These films lack explicit scenes, but often make use of cinematography and suggestive dialogue to imply explicit violence or sex. The camera is a participant tool that can only objectify that what it captures. Through close ups and the (re)assembling of these images, film noir 'cut up' and rearranged female bodies in the studio as well as the editing room.

Film Noir was one of the most prominent Hollywood genres of the forties and fifties. The numerous catalogue of 'hardboiled' crime novels, lend itself perfectly for filmmaking, prompting major Hollywood studios to release multiple noir productions a year. Many authors in the genre were also screenwriters at the time and became a vital part of Hollywood's male dominated culture. The influence of Film Noir reached far and wide, and sparked successful European imitations, like Carol Reid's *The Third Man* (1949) (Guardian Film)



Figure 4: A close up of Phyllis (Barbara Stanwyck) in *Double Indemnity* (1944)

In the late fifties, the golden age of film noir passed by with the rise of Technicolor and the end of the classical Hollywood studio system. 'Even so, the angles, aesthetics and beats that characterised those essential crime movies informed the genre films that followed in the post-studio system, post-Hays Code period. For example, John Boorman's *Point Black* is Lee Marvin and the American pulp tradition jiving to new wave rhythms in the sunshine of the 60s. The 70s produced a whole spate of fresh Chandler adaptations and Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*.' (Clayton, 2014)

The 80s and 90s gave rise to a revival of 'neo-noir' films, in which the femme fatale was rediscovered and reinvented. According Paul O' Callaghan (2016), the term was thrown around so liberally in pop culture criticism, that virtually any stylish modern crime film is liable to be branded as such. In this new era, movies like *Body Double* (1984) and *Basic Instinct* (1992) dominated box offices and continued many classical noir traditions, although often warping narrative expectations. After the turn of the century, neo noir had become a genre that stood on its own, thus passing on the legacy of the 'hardboiled' crime into a new millennium. Examples of recent noir pictures are *Drive* (2011), in which a Hollywood stunt man with criminal ties tries to protect his lover, and *Sin City: A Dame To Kill For* (2014).

The most remarkable thing about film noir is that it never seems to get out of fashion. 'The best noir stories could have been written today, even if they're 50, 60, 70 years old. Corruption and violence are hardly things of the past. Men in power taking advantage of the weak and getting away with murder – that's the stuff of headlines today,' (O'Callaghan, 2016) Every generation, the genre seems to reinvents itself, although the underlining power of the LA crime genre remains prominent; the genre that is able to reflect our dreads and anguish in an urban existence. 'Aside from the aforementioned aesthetic allure, film noir is all about dwelling in – or at least dipping your delicately painted toes in – darkness. This is the place where the audience's internal anguish, paranoia, alienation and unseemly yearnings find expression on screen.' (Clayton, 2014)

The LA 'hard boiled' tradition became popular in 1930s and 40s by re-establishing the flawed knight as a rough but intelligent private eye or detective, working in gritty Los Angeles. Still, most of its narrative structures and treatment of forensic evidence are rooted in nineteenth century detective stories. Hardboiled fiction then carried its traditions into the apparatus of film noir; a medium which editing techniques and narrative structures afford masculine investment in female victimhood by (literary and figuratively) cutting up the (female) body and objectifying elements of male desire.

CHAPTER II

Murder in Hollywood: The Black Dahlia

Murder

‘On the morning of January 15, 1947, a mother taking her child for a walk in a Los Angeles neighbourhood stumbled upon a gruesome sight: the body of a young naked woman sliced clean in half at the waist. The body was just a few feet from the sidewalk and posed in such a way that the mother reportedly thought it was a mannequin at first glance. Despite the extensive mutilation and cuts on the body, there wasn’t a drop of blood at the scene, indicating that the young woman had been killed elsewhere. [...] The young woman turned out to be a 22-year-old Hollywood hopeful named Elizabeth Short—later dubbed the “Black Dahlia” by the press for her rumoured penchant for sheer black clothes and for the Blue Dahlia movie out at that time.’ (Federal Bureau of Investigation)



Figure 5: The Los Angeles Times reports that Elizabeth Short is identified by the F.B.I.

The murder would go down in history as one of the most notorious unsolved crimes in the history of the U.S. ‘An ensuing media frenzy followed, thanks to the “brutal, misogynistic and ritual nature” of the killing. [...] The murder was never (officially) solved, only adding to the crime’s mystique. There was also the connection to the glamour of the area. She lived in Hollywood, had aspirations to be an actress.’ (Martin, 2017). The murder was one of the first American murders that garnered global media attention. ‘The slaying of Elizabeth Short launched one of the most celebrated manhunts and crime-related media spectacles in history. The Black Dahlia case has come to symbolize a sordid and politically corrupt aspect of mid-century Los Angeles that coexisted, and sometimes commingled, with the Hollywood wealth and glamour.’ (Nelson, Baybliss, (2006)

Adriana Cavarero (2008) coined the term ‘horrorism’, which is a form of violation grounded in the offense of disfiguration and massacre. She locates ‘horrorism’ in the philosophical, political, literary, and artistic representations of defenseless and vulnerable victims. Elizabeth Short, and enormous

amount of media attention that followed, are a prime example of ‘horrorism’, for the vulnerable Elizabeth Short’s was body was literally disfigured.



Figure 6: The body of Elizabeth Short was found in a vacant lot in near Leimert Park, Los Angeles. Photographer unknown, 1947

Sensationalism

‘Los Angeles had a rich newspaper and tabloid culture. All of these papers had underworld columnists... crime reporters. Crime was central entertainment in a pre-tv world, when people still got morning and evening newspapers.’ (Buntin, 2019) When a reporter from the Los Angeles Examiner contacted Elizabeth Short’s mother, he stated that her daughter had won a beauty contest in order to get information about her life. This story perfectly displays the unethical behaviour of reporters at the time. Early crime reporters from the Herald dubbed it ‘The Werewolf Murder,’ says Harnish (2006) as to further sensationalise on the gruesome details that slowly poured out. According to the 2019 podcast *Root of Evil*, there was a Black Dahlia cover story in the LA Times for 31 straight days. In his book ‘Hard-boiled Hollywood’, Jon Lewis claims that ‘the tragic and mysterious circumstances surrounding the deaths of Elizabeth Short, or the Black Dahlia, and [later that of] Marilyn Monroe ripped open Hollywood’s glitzy façade, exposing the city’s ugly underbelly of corruption, crime, and murder.’ The gruesome tale of Elizabeth Short symbolizes LA’s dark heart and has burned its vital place in American culture.

Steve Hodel, who worked as an LAPD homicide detective for years, wrote a book called *The Black Dahlia Avenger*, in which he claims that his own father – George Hodel – is Elizabeth Short’s killer. This book prompted writers Mark Nelson and Sarah Hudson Baybliss to further investigate the murder and its possible links to the surrealist movement; which had a long history of portraying women dissected at the waist or ‘in pieces’. Quite convincingly, they propose the theory that the murderer was familiar with surrealist art and that the crime might have been a macabre version of an ‘exquisite corpse’; an artistic method of collectively assembling words or images.

The murder of Elizabeth Short is not just the subject of a certain time period, but seems to have an everlasting appeal to writers and filmmakers. Youtube is filled with videos about the case, and there are several active Reddit threads in which Elizabeth Short's murder is part of discussion. The murder case has been adapted many times for the silver and small screen. It has been turned into multiple motion pictures and shows, was featured on many true crime shows and documentaries, and several books were based on the case. In Episode ten of the first season of *American Horror Story: Murder House* (2011) Elizabeth Short's ghost (Mena Suvari) cries and exclaims that that she had dreams of becoming famous, but was found 'naked, on display for the whole world to see.' Another spirit (Kate Mara) responds; 'You were the front news of every paper for two months.' Elizabeth Short lightens up and utters; 'I really did become somebody,' The ironic scene perfectly captures the morbid view this series has of Hollywood; which has a ...

III

Case study #1: True Confessions (1981)

The thriller *True Confessions* (1981), is centred on a LAPD detective Tom Spellacy (Robert Duvall) that tries to solve the case of woman that is found cut in half, while reconnecting with his brother Des (Robert DeNiro), an ambitious monsignor. The screenplay was written by John Gregory and Joan Didion, and was based on Gregory's novel of the same name. 'It is a Los Angeles more or less familiar from dozens of other movies [...] small town, really, where the grafters and the power brokers know each other' (Ebert, 1981)



Figure 7: The discovery of the body in *True Confessions* (1981) © Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.



Figure 8: A photograph taken after some time after the discovery of Elizabeth Short's body. Photographer unknown, 1947.

Discovery

The scene where body is discovered, differs little from the real-life discovery. The body of the female victim (Lois Fazenda) is found in a vacant lot at the edge of a shabby LA neighbourhood, laying naked and torn in half, amidst rubbish. 'The [Elizabeth Short] crime scene was teeming with reporters, photographers, and a crowd of curious onlookers.' (The Black Dahlia Web) In the film, the discovery of the murder plays out in the exact same way.

Examination

Investigator Tom later visits the morgue to learn more from the coroner. The most striking difference between the forensic photos and fictionalised victim (portrayed by model Amanda Cleveland), is the absence of the facial wounds; especially the 'Glasgow smile'. The movie victim appears somewhat angelic, almost statue-like. Even the wound of her dissection is neatly stitched up and a table covers the part where her body is cut in half. The small bruise on her head is the only sign that violence was inflicted upon this young woman. The actual autopsy photos show a more graphic scene. In these gruesome images, Short's eyes are halfway closed, her face is heavily battered and there are several

deep cutting wounds visible on her breasts and lower body.

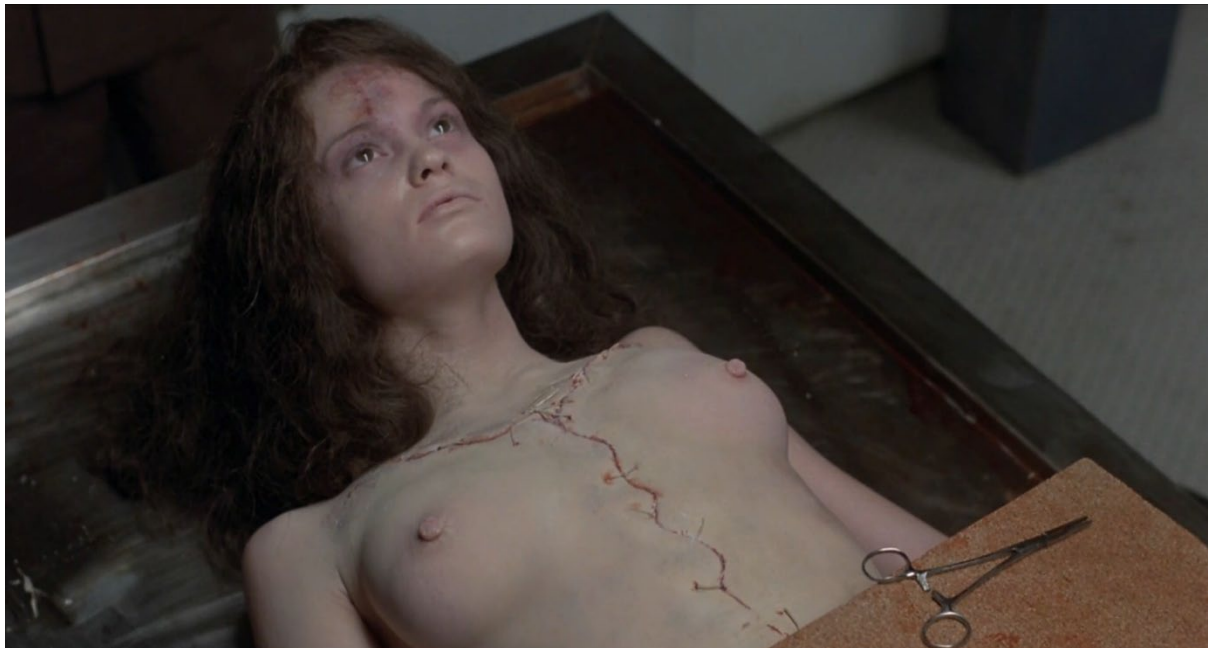


Figure 9: Lois Fazenda (Missy Cleveland) on display on the coroner's table at the morgue in True Confessions (1981). © Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.

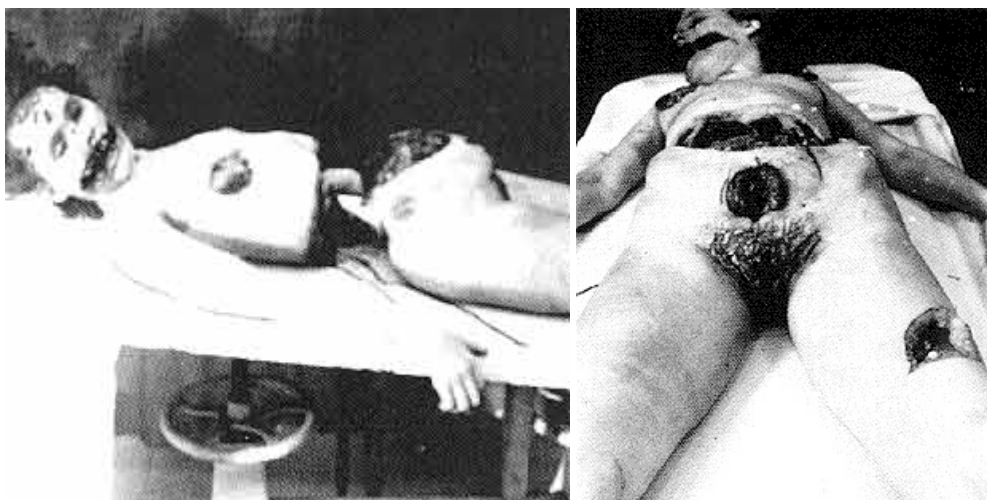


Figure 15: Two actual photos made of Elizabeth Short's dissected corpse at the morgue. Photographer unknown, 1947.

In the film, the press labels the victim named Lois Fazenda as 'The Virgin Tramp,' for they find out that she was a Catholic and a prostitute, turning the murder into a sensational case. Although Elizabeth Short was never proven to be a prostitute, the film victim is subtly blamed throughout the entire movie for hanging with the wrong crowd and exposing herself to danger. 'There's not a foolish line in it [the film], nor a bland character,' Canby (1981) writes in The New York Times, but he obviously forgot the dead girl. She, as a character, is hollow and almost functions like a prop; for the audience never learns anything about her personality or interests.

Crime scene

The detective eventually discovers that a sleazy porn producer is involved. Lois stars in the so called 'stag film' that is a recurring trope in the fictionalisations of the Black Dahlia case, despite the fact that such a film was never found. Aside from *True Confessions*, a (lesbian) porn film plays a vital role in Brian de Palma's *The Black Dahlia* (2006), which was based on James Elroy's bestseller of the same name. It was also a plot point the videogame *LA Noire* (2014), which featured the Black Dahlia case. The fact that many fictionalised stories based on the Black Dahlia case involve a porno, says something about the male fantasies that are so easily projected on this crime story, and link eroticism with murder. It all adds to the same eradication of the victims personality. She is a prostitute, one of the lowest of the low, according to the film. Especially compared to the celibate monsignor, Lois is portrayed as a worthless piece of trash. She is belittled, blamed and given a mocking name by sensationalist media. Throughout this misogynistic process, Lois Fazenda's humanity is erased.

After discovering the stag film, Duvall's character follows up on a tip and discovers an abandoned movie set: the place where Lois was tortured and killed. Tom opens a backdoor and finds a bloodstained mattress. A trail leads to a bathtub where the Dahlia was supposedly drained of blood.



Figure 16: The mattress were Lois Fazenda was tortured and murdered, *True Confessions* (1981) © (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.)



Figure 17: A trail of blood at the place where Lois Fazenda was tortured and murdered. True Confessions (1981) (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.)



Figure 19: The bathtub in which Lois Fazenda was drained of her blood, as seen through a half opened door. True Confessions (1981) (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.)

Nor the camera nor the detective linger longer than necessary at the crime scene, and after we've seen the bathtub for only two brief seconds, the detective leaves the room and draws his final conclusions. Robert Duvall is horrified, and therefore the audience is. What's notable, is the fact that Tom finds this murder scene on his own. The scene is as an intimate dance between the man and the victim's ghost. In contrast to the crime scene at the beginning of the film, riddled with reporters and detectives, here there is no body; but just the physical manifestation of violence, the crusty red blood that trails from one horrific scene to the next. With visible anguish, Tom visualises what horrors occurred. The

audiences sees the man coming to terms with the violence that another man has inflicted upon an innocent young woman. What he sees is the rampage of a murderous beast and it reminds him a little of himself.

This cathartic scene intelligently borders on the thin line between discomforting realness and the notion that it's all just make-believe... Staged. And this is thin line is what's interesting to me, mainly because it is clearly rooted in a male fantasy. This particular scene has no basis in reality; the murder spot was never found. So the crime scene discovery is an addition that merely serves the redemption of the protagonist. He cracks the case through clever detective work, and therefore plays out the audience's fantasy of solving the murder.

True Confessions (1981) is not about the victim. It is about a hardboiled detective and a man of the cloth. Two clever but emotionally incapable men, both powerful in their own way, but each haunted and restrained by hierarchic powers and behavioural rules. While they clash, both brothers to have crises of conscience as each tries to attain redemption and regain self-esteem.

'True Confessions,' the film as well as the novel, owes a lot to a kind of 1940's, tough-guy, fringe-world Southern California fiction in which private eyes drink whisky instead of coffee for breakfast and calmly turn in their sweethearts on murder-one raps because, well, you can't trust a dame who shoots real bullets. She can kill you as easily as she burns toast.' Canby (1981) writes. *True Confessions* (1981) a film about two brothers. The poster resonates this message; the faces of the two leading men are positioned in the centre of the image. Over their faces, a black and white picture of a long, female leg in stockings represents sexuality. The victim in the film doesn't even wear stockings, but in the poster, they are added for effect; a clear association with prostitution. It is no coincidence that the poster shows a disembodied limb; the camera dissects, cuts and disembodies the female figure in order to make her insignificant and anonymous.



Figure 20: The theatrical release poster for *True Confessions* (1981)

Poster

I want to argue that the central murder in the film is a projection of sexual frustration and the masculine investment in female victimhood. The murdered woman itself isn't all that important; her leg on the poster resembles womanhood as perceived through the male gaze. No face, no body. Just a leg; an object of desire. Aside from being particularly attractive, she could basically be anyone. She is looked down upon and disrespected by several male characters and her murder is merely treated as a compelling puzzle for the male protagonist to obsess over. The only moment in which the brutal torture and violence that is inflicted upon her gains some momentum, is when Tom discovers the murder site. The place itself reminds him, as well as the audience, of the sheer brutality of the act. The blood, now crusty and dry, resembles violence, but not the victim. There is an absent space; namely the body... the main piece of evidence. The movie cuts the horror into digestible parts, but keeps the actual violence hidden. Ironically, the camera and editing of the film is a dark and violent tool; that encourages

dissociation with the female victim after which the narrative can freely focus on the brothers.

IV

Case study 2: *The Black Dahlia* (2006)

In Brian De Palma's *The Black Dahlia* (2006), two policemen see their personal and professional lives fall apart in the wake of the Elizabeth Short murder investigation. The film was based on the 1987 novel of the same name written by James Ellroy; a heavily fictionalised account on the murder case of Elizabeth Short. It received mainly bad reviews although critics praised Mia Kirshner's performance, who plays Elizabeth Short in audition tapes, that are scattered through the movie. In one of these scenes, Elizabeth Short crawls towards the director that's giving her directions. What's notable is that Brian de Palma himself voices the director; implying him an abusing culprit, just as the audience. In these fragments, Elizabeth Short is a melancholic but pathetic figure... desperate for fame and not afraid to use her body to get what she wants. A hybrid between a femme fatale with spooky blue eyes and a desperate wannabe starlet.

At the heart of this film are the two buddies/co-workers, and just as in *True Confessions* (1981) there is a homosexual element to their friendship. In the first part of the film, the two men fight each other bare chested under their boxing aliases Mr. Fire and Mr. Ice. This violent boxing match functions as the start of their professional and unprofessional companionship. Later in the film, they even share the same wife (Johansson) – Kay - a scarred beauty that is both an object of desire as well as a symbol for serenity and domesticity. The fact that she dresses in white for most of the film amplifies the not so subtle contrast with her and the Dahlia, who is dressed in black. Both are victims of (sexual) abuse, but Kay eager to put her role as abused gangster's prostitute behind to live out the traditional role of housewife, while Betty Short pays with her life for her promiscuous behaviour. Women are literally and figuratively perceived through the gaze of men in this film, both the two protagonists as the director himself. They are either victim or survivor; but always suffer by the hand of men.

Discovery

The film spends its first twenty five minutes establishing the relationship between the two protagonists; experienced LAPD Homicide detective Lee Blanchard and rookie cop Josh 'Bucky' Hartnett. While on a raid, they conveniently watch through a window as several newspapers, detectives and cops rush over to a corpse. The camera then switches over to a homicide chef, blating as how no one should trample over the evidence and how some of the details have to remain disclosed as to prevent fake confessions. Not much later, many reporters breach the perimeter and flash their cameras at the gruesome discovery. As in *True Confessions* (1981), the discovery of the body plays out quite similar to the actual discovery of Elizabeth Short's remains. But instead of lingering on the corpse, 'De Palma defies typical mystery / horror conventions by not displaying her mangled body in its entirety. Instead, he basically only shows the enthusiastic crowd of men – cops, reporters, and the like – hovering over her, taking notes and photographs, muttering about the case. A single shot is dedicated to showing Elizabeth Short's face – when a hungry crow pecks away at her cheek. An apt metaphor.' (The Film Stage, 2016)



Figure 21: Men swarm the crime scene



Figure 22: The audience only gets a (very) brief shot of Elizabeth Short's remains.

Autopsy

Not much later, Bucky and Blanchard visit the morgue. The only woman in the room is busy transcribing the words of the coroner, while the men eagerly hover over the body, taking notes. The scene is shot from above and slowly pans down, implying the viewer as a spectator, who - as an investigator or a Peeping Tom - takes a closer look at the many wounds on the dead girl's body. While the wounds are almost completely consistent with the ones Elizabeth Short got, despite a puncture wound in the hand, which is later revealed to be sustained during the shoot of a lesbian stag film. 'One of the cops asks, "Is it okay if I smoke?"' The doctor jokingly replies, "She won't mind!" Elizabeth Short is already no longer a woman, no longer someone to be courteous and considerate of.' (The Film Stage, 2016). Instead, she quickly becomes a canvas upon which the male characters can project their fantasies on. Bucky later gets involved with a degenerate rich girl Madeleine (Hillary Swank) that gets a kick out of impersonating the Black Dahlia. Bucky starts an affair with her, but this cheap impersonation of the 'real' Elizabeth Short can't compete. Susan Sontag wrote about the **erotization of violence**;The scarred but beautiful housewife (Scarlett Johansson) that is waiting for him at home is no match for his necrophiliac fantasies which he (unsuccessfully) tries to play out with Madeleine. Meanwhile, his partner Bleichert slowly loses his mind while using the Dahlia case as a canvas upon which he can project his guilt about the vanishing of his younger sister. Although it doesn't do it well in this film version, Ellroy's story unapologetically mocks the mad men that are projecting their own fantasies upon the victim and the sensationalist media, that further objectify her. 'In many respects, the corpse of a woman is the ideal vessel for the hopes and desires of the men burying her. She can be anything they want her to be - a dream girl (Bucky's ideal), an opportunity to retroactively be a hero (Blanchard's take), a slut who had it coming (Elizabeth Short's father's opinion), on and on. The ultimate fantasy.' The media are just as guilty; exploiting the crime; further disembodiment the young woman that was Elizabeth Short. In this movie; almost everyone is complicit. The only one that isn't is Kay; the obvious allegory for a beautiful suburban dream wife.



Figure 23: Again, men hover over the corpse.

Crime Scene

Eager detective Bucky drags the audience through the film with a narration of his thoughts. As Brian De Palma is known for his unique style in which he exposes certain genre tropes through exaggeration and reference, one can only speculate if he deliberately turned the protagonist into a cliché, or maybe the writers just didn't fail to elevate Bucky from a Film Noir stereotype. Just as in *True Confessions* (1981) a stag film is found, and detective 'Bucky' Bleichert finds the scene of the crime because he connects a clue from the film that leads him to unfold a complicated plot. It turns out that Elizabeth

Short was killed inside a barn on a Hollywood(land), owned by the father of Madeleine, a crooked estate magnate called Emmett. Bucky breaks the lock of the barn and illuminates it, to find a dark torture chamber. As in the discovery of the crime scene in *True Confessions*, (1981) a bloody mattress is the central piece of evidence that this must be the place. But instead of just crusty blood tails, here there is also a strand of black hair and an ominous clown painting. Later, it turns out that the unhinged wife of Emmett murdered Short out of jealousy and envy. This is interesting, for the real suspect list solely consisted of men. That a woman is the culprit in this film is notable; mainly because writer Ellroy has stated that he wrote the 1983 book in order to cope with the unsolved murder of his mother, that was found dead in a vacant lot when he was still a kid. According to Ellroy, the book 'Is an attempt to honour two women who had died too young: Betty Short and Jean Hilliker. (Ellroy, The Guardian, 2020). But Ellroy has also said that Elizabeth Short 'Spaws my lifelong dialogue with misogyny.' (Ellroy, J. Slate, 2006) Bleichert eventually finds out that the lunatic mother of Madeleine is responsible for the death of Betty Short. Most women in *The Black Dahlia* (2006) are either a pathetic failure (Betty Short) or a crazy degenerate (the killer, Madeleine). The only sane person is the brutalized Kay, that was somehow able to leave her abusive past behind and become the cooking housewife with the wits and curves of a *femme fatale*. But Kay is a *living* fantasy, and rather than feast on it, the male characters are haunted by the ghost of the mythical Black Dahlia; they chase it in order to find redemption or to fulfill their twisted desires. But they all fail and succumb to their masculine fantasies.



Figure 24: Detective Bucky lights the murder scene with his flashlight.

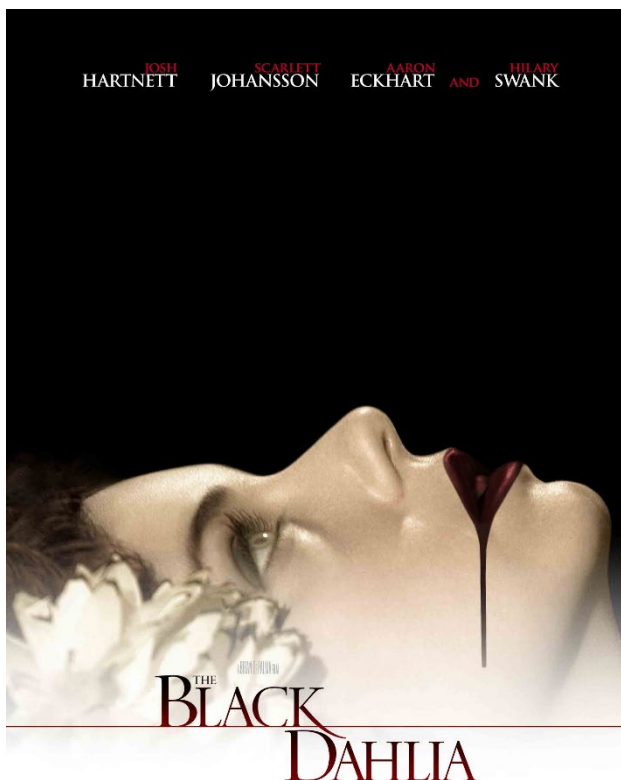


Figure 25: The Theatrical release poster for *The Black Dahlia* (2006)

Poster

The official poster of the *Black Dahlia* shows us Elizabeth Short (Mia Kirshner) looking vacantly at the sky, the slashes in the corner of her mouth symbolized by dripping lipstick. It's a clever way to reference the brutality of the murder without actually showing the violence (and thus get around strict laws for theatrical posters). Elizabeth Short is shown as a mannequin or a waxlike doll. The profile of Mia Kirshner's model like, pale face contrasts starkly with the black background. Just as is with the case with her pseudonym, Elizabeth Short is turned into a symbol of objectification and phantasy. On the poster she lingers somewhere between dead and alive; she is attractive enough for the audience to be compelling, but her glazy eyes signaling that she is likely dead. It almost has a necrophiliac quality to it; closely balancing on the edge between disturbing and compelling.

To put Short solely on the cover was a daring move though, even more so because Mia Kirshner was not an established actress at the

time. Perhaps the lack of prominent Hollywood stars on the cover amplified the movie's poor box office results; *The Black Dahlia* (2006) earned back half a million dollar short of its budget. What's interesting is that on the cover of DVD & Blu-ray release, the three main stars (Hartnett, Johansson and Eckhart) are put prominently in the center, while the *Black Dahlia* herself is absent. Just as with the *True Confessions* (1981) there is the absence of body; she is deliberately removed from the cover, as to make space for her male counterparts.

Despite being an incoherent and Ludacris movie that sometimes feels like a cheap parody of a classic

hardboiled story, 'Ellroy used that cold case as a launching pad for his novel, and the movie does the same thing. In actuality, the murder of Elizabeth Short [...] is only a subplot in the film. (Beradinelli, 2006) 'Betty Short was a real woman who was slowly and brutally tortured to death, and whose killer tried to dehumanize her by turning her into an object. Her story may have the makings of great pulp fiction, but there is nothing playfully cinematic or campy about it' (Dargis, 2006)

V Cinematic portrayals of masculine fantasies and female victimhood

After carefully analysing two films based on a different take on The Black Dahlia case, and are rooted in a hardboiled tradition, I can clearly recognize the narrative tropes and female disembodiment that is present in the two prominent films based on The Black Dahlia murder.

Female victimhood

True Confessions (1981), takes a classical approach to the LA crime genre and successfully mimics late 1940s Los Angeles as depicted in hardboiled crime novels. The murder of Elizabeth Short is slightly altered and merely operates as a plot motif that drive the narrative forward. Robert Duvall plays a classical 'hardboiled' detective. With his wit, temper and scruffy behaviour, he is quite reminiscent of the so called 'male movie knight' from Raymond Chandler novels. The character functions as a flawed but righteous antihero through which the audience can solve the infamous Black Dahlia murder. It first dehumanizes the female victim, so she can become a forensic object for the male protagonist; a puzzle for him to solve. *True Confessions* (1981) then proceeds to further disembody the victim through using her as a plot tool for the male protagonists' redemption.

In *The Black Dahlia* (2006), Elizabeth Short is the subject of investigation and sensationalism as well. But while *True Confessions* (1981) carefully anonymises the victim through narrative denigration and cinematic objectification, as to make room for the male narratives, *The Black Dahlia* (2006) does something else. Here Betty Short is literally given a voice through audition tapes that detective Bucky watches throughout the film. These fragments, however, reveal that Betty Short – as in *True Confessions* (1981) - is a promiscuous and pathetic figure, an image that conflicts with the fantasies the male characters project on her role as victim. In both films, Elizabeth Short is revealed to have starred in stag film, even though this was in reality never discovered. Both films are eager to portray Elizabeth Short as a desperate whore willing to everything for fame. In the eyes of the male protagonists, the fact that the victim is promiscuous justifies her gruesome fate somewhat. *The Black Dahlia* (2006) further puts great emphasis of her as a victim that held on a leash by the Hollywood studio system; a male-dominated world that makes a living through the abuse and objectification of young women. Susan Sontag's theory of the erotization of horror is applicable to this film, for the female victim is sexualised through the necrophiliac fantasies of the male protagonist.



Figure 26: In *The Black Dahlia* (2006), Elizabeth Short (Mia Kirshner) stars in a stag film, in which she is brutalized with a menacing looking dildo by her co-star.

Masculine fantasies

Both films are centred on the relationship between two men, which are played by famous Hollywood

stars. In both pictures, they are men with an intimate bond. In *True Confessions* (1981), they are brothers, one detective, the other working as a monsignor. *The Black Dahlia* (2006) is a film about two cops that become close friends. There is a homosexual element to these relationships; especially in *The Black Dahlia* (2006); which starts with the two men fighting each other with bare torsos. Later they share a romantic partner. The two films, both in their own way, alter historic events in order to fit their narrative; both are about male fantasies but the main difference is that *True Confessions* (1981) uses masculine investment in female victimhood as a way to find redemption for both the protagonists and the audience. *The Black Dahlia* merely uses the murder case as a way to display and cynically comment upon men's stake in the case; the male characters lose their sanity while chasing the ghost of the female victim. What's important in the fantasies played out *True Confessions* (1981), is that the ideal masculinity is defined by a classical, stoic rationality, defiance of rules and a resort to violence. Violence is shown as necessary and cathartic, while female victimhood is used a plot motif. In order to (re)gain relevance, the male characters have to save the female protagonist or avenge the death of the victim. The protagonist can only be a phantasy when there is a savage, untamed men (often a murderous or sexual predator) that functions as an antagonist.

Although the hardboiled detective narrative of *The Black Dahlia* (2006) is in many ways similar to that in *True Confessions* (1981), the film portrays the men as deranged and obsessed, instead of rational and stoic. The film explore men's obsession with female victimhood; turning the Dahlia murder investigation into a bizarre mockery of the men that project their messed up fantasies upon the victim. The two detectives that star both chase the ghost of death girl, projecting their desires and fantasies upon the vessel that is Elizabeth Short. Despite his unhealthy obsession, main protagonist Bucky (Josh Hartnett) is in many ways a classical 'hardboiled' detective; acting tough with a complete disregard for the law. Bucky is the narrator of the film, thus the audience perceives the investigation through his thoughts and words. The traditional masculine embodiment of a detective leads the viewer on; but simultaneously the movie seems to *want* the audience to take some distance from this stereotypical male character and his necrophiliac obsessions.

Both pictures search for meaning and purpose into the real life tragedy in which a young aspiring starlet was brutally killed and displayed, by warping them into a fictional narrative in which the male protagonist has to solve the case. In *True Confessions* (1981), the murderer is already deceased when the protagonist solves the case, but his crime gives the main character something to obsess over and thus redeems him when finally solving the case in the end. In *The Black Dahlia* (2006), the culprit turns out to be a crazy woman. Despite all the despicable men that have laid to groundwork to Betty Short's downfall, it is a jealous mother that eventually murders her. 'Real' women don't exist in these pictures that carry the classic noir traditions in them; they are either dated stereotypes (such as the Femme Fatale or the Freudian hysterical mother) or objects that are disembodied or dissected by men in order to become forensic evidence.

Conclusion

Over the course of the 1940s, the 'hardboiled' LA crime genre broke with the conventional crime fiction by introducing a new type of protagonist against a portrayal of Los Angeles as a sleazy and crime-ridden town. This type of narrative broke with the detectives as made popular by Poe and , in which forensic With the rise of 'talkies' in Hollywood, the character trope of the gumshoe detective quickly transcended from literature into cinema. Through Film Noir, the gumshoe detective became a Hollywood household name, turning the stories of hardboiled crime writers into crime movies with a stark and dark visual language, derived from German expressionist film. The stories on which these films were based, often took inspiration from sensational real life crimes that happened in and around Los Angeles. The Film Noir genre reinvented itself over the years, but its source in the hardboiled literature genre is still easily noticeable. Tropes such as the male movie knight are still predominant in contemporary cinema. These narratives, in which women are already 'cut' into , were amplified and .

Through analysing two major motion pictures based upon infamous Black Dahlia murder, I proved that male phantasies as established in hardboiled fiction, were and are still prominent in cinema. *True Confessions* (1981) took a conventional approach by using female victimhood as a plot device. The film is re-enacting a time when Los Angeles was a more seedy and violent place, as so often portrayed in hardboiled crime novels and Film Noir. The film carefully establishes post War LA as a metropole challenged by large scale corruption, morally ambiguous power figures and gruesome crimes on which media outlets sensationally report. Despite the murder of a young girl taking a central place in the film's narrative, it is a mainly a film about two clashing brothers. By portraying the female victim through a moralistic lens in which she is belittled and blamed, the film dissolves her identity. Her murder is merely used as a plot device, so the male protagonists can find redemption. The body victim Lois Fazenda – like her real like counterpart Elizabeth Short – is found literally into pieces. In the poster, just a symbolic female leg is shown, further proving that the editing techniques are used to objectify the female victim.

In *The Black Dahlia* (2006), two men are also starring, but in this film masculinity is defined through obsession, projection and madness. The protagonist fits the Female victimhood is a plot motif and is mainly used to give the male narrative relevance and a reason to display their obsessions and (necrophiliac) desires. I established that in both these films, the camera mechanical tool that uses narrative to disembodify female characters and cut them into pieces; turning them into forensic objects.

With this thesis, I explored the hardboiled literature genre and its transcendence into cinema, and the relation this genre has to the infamous 1947 Hollywood murder of Elizabeth Short. Through cinematic analyses of two major motion pictures based on the case, I have shown how the case is used to portray classical masculine fantasies and female victimhood in cinema. I have discussed the ways in which the these films allow its female characters to be disembodied and dehumanized through narrative tropes and cinematography. I explored the ways in tropes from hardboiled literature still fuel the masculine fantasies that play out in these two films, that use the Black Dahlia case as a vessel to display the masculine investment in female victimhood.

Bibliography

References (In alphabetical order)

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2019/11/8848121/oscar-movies-toxic-masculinity-theme-2020>

- Abbott, M (2018) The Big Seep: Reading Raymond Chandler in the Age of #MeToo. Slate. Available at <https://slate.com/culture/2018/07/raymond-chandler-in-the-age-of-metoo.html>
- Adebawale, T (2020) Men's Health. Available at <https://www.menshealth.com/entertainment/a32290089/hollywood-hays-code/>
- Bancroft, C (2018) https://www.tampabay.com/features/books/Bancroft-Despite-his-thorny-place-in-culture-Raymond-Chandler-remains-a-great-love_170359256/
- Berardinelli, J (2006) Available at <https://www.reelviews.net/reelviews/black-dahlia-the>
- Bergstrom, J (2014) Warning Shadows: German Expressionism and American Film Noir. Edinburgh University Press
- Biro, B. Available at <http://www.ia.hiof.no/~borres/krim/pdffiler/Biro.pdf>
- Biskind, P (2019) Esquire. Available at <https://www.esquire.com/entertainment/movies/a28518898/charles-manson-family-america-obsession-pop-culture/>
- The Black Dahlia Web. Available at <http://blackdahlia.web.unc.edu/the-crime-scene/>
- Bugliosi, V & Gentry, C (1994) Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders 25th Anniversary Edition, W. W. Norton & Company
- Buntin, J (2019) Root Of Evil: The True Story Of The Hodel Family and the Black Dahlia, episode 'A Skilled Surgeon'
- Canby, V (1981) The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/09/25/movies/true-confessions-with-de-nero-and-duvall.html>
- Clayton, J (2014), Den Of The Geek. Available at <https://www.denofgeek.com/movies/sin-city-and-the-eternal-seductive-allure-of-film-noir/>
- Chandler, R (1976) as cited in Frank MacShane: The Life of Raymond Chandler. Page 51. Dutton Books.
- Chandler, R (1943) The Lady In The Lake. Alfred A. Knopf
- Didion, J (1979) The White Album. Farrar, Straus and Giroux
- Dargis, M (2006) The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/15/movies/15dahl.html>
- Donaghey, R. VICE. Available at https://www.vice.com/en_us/partners/strange-angel/how-charles-manson-put-an-end-to-the-hippie-movement
- Eggersten, C (2019) Curbed Los Angeles. Available at <https://la.curbed.com/2019/12/16/21019466/film-noir-definition-meaning-best>
- Ebert, R (1981) Chicago-Sun Times. Available at <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/true-confessions-1981>
- Erickson, S (2014) LA Mag. Available at <https://www.lamag.com/steveerickson/maps-to-the-stars-grapples-with-the-movie-business-most-complicated-character-hollywood-itself/>
- Ellroy, J (2020) The Guardian, Available at

- Ellroy, J (2016) Slate, Available at
- Federal Bureau Of Investigation. Available at <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/the-black-dahlia>
- Gentile, Y & Pecoraro, R (2019) Root Of Evil: The True Story Of The Hodel Family and the Black Dahlia, episode 'A Skilled Surgeon'
- Guardian Film (2019) available at <https://www.theguardian.com/film/gallery/2019/sep/05/the-third-man-behind-the-scenes-film-noir-in-pictures>
- Golden, A (2015). Books Tell You Why. Available at <https://blog.bookstellyouwhy.com/hardboiled-fiction-and-hollywood>
- Harnisch, L (2006) LA Times. Available at <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2006-sep-15-et-dahlia15-story.html>
- Hodel, S (2019) Root Of Evil: The True Story Of The Hodel Family and the Black Dahlia, episode 'A Skilled Surgeon'
- James, C (2014), Den Of The Geek. Available at <https://www.denofgeek.com/movies/sin-city-and-the-eternal-seductive-allure-of-film-noir>
- Jordison, S (2014) The Guardian. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2014/dec/09/december-reading-group-the-maltese-falcon-dashiell-hammett>
- Lewis, J (2017) Hard-boiled Hollywood. University of California
- McKeen, W (1970) Available at <https://theconversation.com/charles-manson-and-the-perversion-of-the-american-dream-87992>
- Moore, D (2006) Cracking the Hard-boiled Detective: A Critical History from the 1920s to the Present
- Martin, G (2017) BBC. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38513320>
- Nelson, M & Baybliss, S (2006) Exquisite Corpse: The Black Dahlia. Bulfinch Press.
- O'Callaghan (2016). Available at <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/fast-track-fandom-where-begin-neo-noir>
- Rife, K (2019) AV Club. Available at <https://film.avclub.com/once-upon-a-time-in-hollywood-is-quentin-tarantino-s-1836636382>
- Turan, K (2019) LA Times. Available at <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/movies/story/2019-07-24/once-upon-a-time-in-hollywood-quentin-tarantino-leonardo-dicaprio-brad-pitt-margot-robbie>
- van de Graaf, B (2019) Trouw. Available at <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/once-upon-a-time-in-hollywood-is-zowel-in-memorial-als-liefdesbrief-voor-het-oude-hollywood>
- Wyne, K (2019) Available at <https://www.newsweek.com/horrifying-true-story-sharon-tate-murder-charles-manson-hollywood-stardom-more-1451328>
- Yu, E (2020) LAist. Available at https://laist.com/2020/01/15/violent_crime_Los_Angeles_LAPD_Michel_Moore_homicide_property_crime_hit_and_run

